Production of polyester staple fibre

772. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that production of polyester staple fibre is about 8,000 m. ton per month whereas the production of viscose staple fibre is only about 5,000 m. ton per month;

(b) whether the spinning mill sector has been requesting Government to allow import of viscose staple fibre to fulfil the above gap at reduced duties to bring the imported fibre at par with that of indigenous fibre prices;

(c) whether the sole manufacturer of viscose staple fibre in the country, MIs. Grasim Industries Limited had unilaterally increased its prices of dyed viscose fibre by about Rs. 3/- per kg. last month despite have given an undertaking in 1985 to Government that it would not effect any price hike; and

(d) if so, how Government propose to ensure supply of full requirement of viscose staple fibre of spinning mills and also ensure proposed production of low-priced polyester blended fabrics?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) According to available information, during the period September to November, 1986, the average monthly production of polyester staple fibre was 6065 M.T. and that of regular viscose staple fibre was 8300 M.T.

(b) Yes, Sir, there have been requests for reduction of import duty on viscose staple fibre.

(c) and (d) Do not arise, as there is no such undertaking in force. In any case, the availability of viscose staple fibre through indigenous production and imports under OGL is reviewed from time to time. In order to improve the availability of fibres at competitive prices for projected requirements, Government have, from time to time, issued letters of intent for fresh capacity.

Central team to study issuance of visas by Indian High Commission, London

773. SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to send a Central team to London to study the procedure of issuing visas by the Indian High Commission, London to prospective visitors; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) The Central Team visited High Commission of India, London in December, 1986.

(b) The Team studied visa procedures and had a personal dialogue with visa officers from selected Indian Missions in Western Europe to understand their problems and brief the visa officers about the details of up-dated guide-lines on consular procedures and visa matters. Suitable follow-up action is being taken to stream-line the procedures where found necessary.

774. [*Transferred to the 11th March*, 1987.]

Iran's keenness in increasing trade with India

775. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Iran has shown keenness in boosting trade with India;

(b) whether an agreement in this regard has been signed between the two countries; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Agreed Minutes were signed at the conclusion of the Indo-Iran Joint Commission in February, 1987.

(c) Iran has expressed a desire to import wheat, meat, tea and other items from India and export crude oil, sulphur and other non-oil commodities like red clay, almonds, raisins, melamine, fresh fruits and cylinders to India.

India has expressed its keenness to supply the above mentioned items in addition to a number of other engineering and manufactured goods like CKD Jeeps, machine tools and lathes, army boots, diesel engines, railway wagons, power generation equipment, tyres, textile fabrics and yarn, jute yarn and goods, automobile parts, chemicals including agro-chemicals, drugs and pharmaceuticals etc. India expressed its readiness to import 100,000 tons of sulphur with 100 per cent counter trade linkage. It has been agreed that Iran would effect imports from India of items of a value equivalent to 50 per cent of the value of the oil imported by India during the period of the oil contract.

WHO survey on environmental pollution

776. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to a recent WHO survey, Delhi is the word's third unhealthy city to live in due to utter disregard to the problem of environmental pollution;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) what is the existing machinery to monitor and control environmental pollution in Delhi and to what extent it has proved to be an effective instrument in controlling pollution; and

(d) whether Government have drawn up any long-term or short-term anti-pollution programme; if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The machinery for monitoring and controlling pollution in Delhi consist of the Central Pollution Control Board and the Delhi Administration. Their functions in this regard are reviewed by the Central Government.

(d) Plans have been drawn and steps have been taken to control pollution in Delhi. These include the following:

(i) Effluent and emission standards in respect of polluting industries have been prescribed and industries have been directed to comply with the standards on a time bound basis;

(ii) Air Pollution Control areas have been notified;

(iii) Programmes for exhaust control of vehicles have been launched;

(iv) The thermal power plants have been directed to install high efficiency electrostatic precipitators;

(v) Legal action is taken against polluting units; and